

## Standards Focus: Response to Literature

### Finding Supporting Quotations

For almost every test, whether it is for your school, your district, or for the state, at one time or another you will have to write an essay responding to literature. A **Response to Literature** prompt asks you to take your own personal opinions and answer the prompt, using examples from the literature to support your ideas.

Some broad examples of prompts are:

- How does the main character change throughout the story? What do you think causes the change? What does this story say about society in general? In what ways does this story remind you of people you have known or experiences you have had in your own life?
- How successful was the author in creating good literature? Support your response with examples from the story.
- Choose one of the following quotations from the story. How does this quotation relate to the elements of the story such as characters or theme?

In each of these examples, it will be necessary to know exactly how to take quotations from the text and make them work for you in your essay. Additionally, it is necessary to have the text in front of you in order to find quotes to support your response. To practice extracting and using quotations for an essay, complete the activity below.

*Prompt: In Section 3, it becomes apparent that Elie is losing faith in himself, in his fellow man, and in God. He shows this through his thoughts and his actions, and in his writing. Using examples from Section 3, **explore the evidence that Elie has begun to lose faith in all around him.** Support your response with references from the text.*

*Directions: In order to write an essay using quotations from the text, re-read Section 3, noting with a sticky note or other technique every reference that you can find dealing with the **evidence that Elie has begun to lose faith in his world.** You will want to find as many quotes as you can—that does not mean you will have to use them all in your essay.*

*Once you have found your quotes, you will need to decide HOW you are going to use them in your essay. Complete the chart below and on the next page to help organize your ideas and views. An example has been done for you.*

Page	Direct Quote	Significance
32	"Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed. Never shall I forget that smoke. Never shall I forget the little faces of the children, whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky...Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever....Never shall I forget that nocturnal silence which deprived me, for all eternity, of the desire to live. Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust. Never shall I forget these things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God. Never."	Elie has witnessed things that no man should ever have to see: the smoke, the flames, the burning children, the condemned adults. He felt the pain of what he had witnessed deep in his soul, so he could no longer feel faith in his God, to whom he had always been able to turn in times of trouble and sadness. The silence of the night, lying awake and thinking about the horrors he had witnessed, took away his desire to live, and took from him his faith in God....How could a good and loving God allow these atrocities to happen to anyone?